

## Toiletten machen Schule - Wettbewerb | Toilets are making the grade - Competition: Competition to improve school toilets in Germany

nationwide, Germany  
nationwide  
Johannes Rück




Project Stage:

Established

**Budget:**

\$10,000 - \$50,000

 SHARE

- [Behavioral issues](#)
- [Citizen participation](#)
- [Health education](#)
- [Sanitation](#)

### Project Summary

#### Elevator Pitch

**Concise Summary: Help us pitch this solution! Provide an explanation within 3-4 short sentences.**

“Toiletten machen Schule” is a nationwide competition for schools, aiming to improve the poor state of many school toilets in Germany. It provides an incentive as well as concrete guidance to schools and students on how to sustainably improve the situation by building up broad partnerships and developing concepts that help breaking the hindering toilet taboo, introduce small but powerful technical improvements and new organizational structures.

#### About Project

**Problem: What problem is this project trying to address?**

The restrooms in many German schools are in a poor condition. Vandalism and graffiti create high costs, hygiene behavior amongst students is often poor and essential hygiene products like soap and (paper) towels are provided only sporadically. The people in charge often have given up or trivialize the problem. The hindering toilet taboo prevents the much needed dialogue to actively improve the situation and many students are suffering from the situation. A survey carried out by German Toilet Organization revealed that almost 65% of the interviewed students don't use the toilets at all and some even avoid drinking anything during the day which in turn can create serious health problems and negative impact on their school performance.

**Solution: What is the proposed solution? Please be specific!**

In order to have maximum impact with limited resources GTO carried out a national school contest asking for the best concepts on how to sustainably improve the school sanitation situation. It was done by providing an incentive (renovation of a boys & girls toilet block for the winning schools) and by providing them with an extensive guidance and inspiration package. Main element here is fostering participation and dialogue among all stakeholders. The proposals therefore had to consist of a jointly carried out problem analysis and jointly developed ideas for 3 pillars of change: 1) awareness raising, 2) technical improvements, 3) organizational structure. The competition is accompanied by media and advocacy work.

#### Impact: How does it Work

**Example: Walk us through a specific example(s) of how this solution makes a difference; include its primary activities.**

In Hannover a mother heard about the competition from the media. She presented the framework at a school meeting where all stakeholders decided jointly to take part. They realized that they wouldn't have a chance, without building a broad partnership. The framework asks in every step how the different groups get involved and how they are linked together. As a result a toilet-committee was established. Students carried out surveys to gather data for the problem analysis, art classes exhibited art at the restrooms, others raised money and some parents with the relevant expertise implemented technical improvements pro bono. After winning the award they reported, that for the first time they felt the power of real participation.

**Spread Strategies: Moving forward, what are the main strategies for scaling impact?**

The demand is still high and we get request almost daily from schools, parents and teachers to run a second round of the competition. In order to expand and to create more outreach we want to build new partnerships particularly with institutions and businesses from the health sector. The health impact of practices like handwashing with soap is well studied, but schools often have no functioning facilities in place to provide an enabling environment for good hygiene practices. An online database is foreseen to make best-practices and information about valuable products and services available to everybody. With our corporate partners we are also in discussion about improving products and services. Ultimately we are considering to export the idea to other countries, because school toilets are an issue worldwide.

#### Sustainability

##### **Marketplace: Who else is addressing the problem outlined here? How does the proposed project differ from these approaches?**

The described solutions stands alone in its market environment. So far there is no competing interactive format like a competition, which tries to stimulate ownership and responsible behavior with public goods. There is one private person who provides information about school toilets, products and services on his website. Some actors from the health sector like Robert-Koch-Institute try to address the poor hygiene-practices of young people with one-way media campaigns. However, their concrete impact within the school environment seems to be rather limited.

#### Team

##### **Team**

The current team complements very well: while GTO brings in its expertise in the area of triggering social impact and participation, the involved corporations can provide specific technical expertise as well as powerful contacts to change makers, media and financiers. Hereby the role of the top management is very important, particularly in large-scale enterprises. A multi-partner co-creation project places high demands on the internal communication. Decision-making processes are simplified if the top management was actively involved and knows the project.

#### About the Lead Co-Creation Partners

##### **Organization:**

CWS-boco International GmbH

[Visit website](#)

##### LEAD SOCIAL-MISSION ORGANIZATION

###### **Organization Name**

German Toilet Organization

###### **Type of organization (e.g. NGO, association, not-for-profit, foundation, social enterprise)**

NGO

###### **Total Number of Full-Time Employees**

5

###### **Lead Contact First Name**

Johannes

###### **Lead Contact Last Name**

Rück

###### **Title**

Mr.

###### **Country**

Germany

###### **Twitter URL**

none

###### **Facebook URL**

<https://www.facebook.com/germantoilet.org>

###### **Website**

[www.germantoilet.org](http://www.germantoilet.org)

##### LEAD CORPORATE PARTNER

###### **Organization Name**

CWS-boco International GmbH

###### **Total Number of Full-Time Employees**

3800

###### **Lead Contact First Name**

Maren

**Lead Contact Last Name**

Otte

**Title**

Head of Corporate Communications & Responsibility

**Country**

Germany

**Twitter URL**

none

**Facebook URL**

none

**Organization Website**

<http://www.cws-boco.de>

**Basic Info****Project Starting Year**

2012

**Primary European Country where this Project is creating social impact**

, nationwide

**Additional European countries where this Project is creating social impact**

not yet, but foreseen in the near future

**Select the category that best fits the type of your project:**

**Other:** If you feel that your entry does not fit any of the above categories, please suggest another category name..

**What awards or honors has the project received?**

Non so far

**Project Summary**

**Co-Creation Model: Tell us about your main strategic partners and how the partnership truly create value. For each Partner please include its type (business/social/public), its name, a short description, its key motivation to participate in the co-creation project, and the key contributions it is making in the co-creation project. Please follow the format displayed below:**

CWS-boco International GmbH

Type: business / private enterprise

CWS offers high quality products and services for washrooms and toilets. The range includes the classic soap dispensers, self-cleaning toilet seats and towel rolls.

Key motivation: Corporate Social Responsibility.

Besides the co-creation of the contest framework, CWS boco provided expertise, products and services especially for the renovations works at the winning schools. CWS boco actively supported the public relations of the project.

Hansgrohe SE

Type: business / private enterprise

Hansgrohe, the innovative bathroom and sanitation specialist, currently employs some 3,450 people across all the continents. With ten production sites and offices in 42 countries, the Hansgrohe Group is one of the few global players in the sanitation sector.

Key Motivation: Corporate Social Responsibility

Besides the co-creation of the contest framework, Hansgrohe provided expertise and supported need assessments with own personnel. The company provided sensor controlled faucets to equip the winning schools. Hansgrohe actively supported the public relations of the project.

Villeroy & Boch AG

Type: business / private enterprise

Villeroy & Boch is one of the leading manufacturer of ceramics with the company headquarters located in Mettlach, Germany. The highly innovative company with a time-honoured tradition focuses its business activities in the company divisions 'Bathroom & Wellness' and 'Tableware'.

Key Motivation: Corporate Social Responsibility

Besides the co-creation of the contest framework, Villeroy & Boch provided its specific expertise especially during the renovations works. and products and services for the award winning schools. Villeroy & Boch actively supported the public relations of the project.

3B Dienstleistungen GmbH

Type: business / private enterprise

Already more than 30 years is the 3B-services group for quality in infrastructural facility management. The group consists of eight subsidiaries with a total of 3,300 employees.

Key Motivation: Corporate Social Responsibility.

Besides the co-creation of the contest framework, 3B provided specific expertise, created cost estimats and renovated a school toilet with its own employees. The company actively supported the public relations of the project.

**Impact: What is the impact of the work to date? Also describe the projected future impact. Please specify using qualitative and quantitative data (e.g. # of indirect and direct beneficiaries); help us understand how this solution truly makes a difference.**

The strictly positive communication of a rather unpleasant issue combined with the concrete offer to win valuable prizes resulted in high participation and publicity. In the first round of the competition 135 schools with whopping 100000 students from all over Germany registered and 80 schools with almost 60000 students submitted comprehensive proposals. The competition's website received almost 10000 page views, the videos were watched almost 3000 times, and the contest-documents were downloaded more than 1000 times. The competition stimulated a broad media coverage, with over 350 articles, on- and offline, from TV up to the opinion leading Spiegel Magazine. Today the issue is definitely higher on the public agenda, than ever before. For us it is overwhelming that so many people began to engage for such a tabooed issue.

Sustainability

**Funding: How is your project financially supported? [select all that apply]**

Businesses.

**Sustainability Plan: Has your project already reached financial sustainability? If not, what is this solution's plan to ensure financial sustainability? Do the main partners have enough stake to sustain the solution? If this project requires limited budget, how will other resources be secured to maintain or grow this work?**

The project seeks to create financial sustainability through increased attractiveness for companies from relevant market segments. One key element of this strategy is the creation of a service section and online-database for schools, which provides further information on appropriate high-quality products and services. A second strategy to secure financial stability is the diversification of partners. In addition to the financiers with commercial interests it is planned to include impact-oriented financiers like health institutions with public funding sources.

Team

**Founding Story: Share a story about the "Aha!" moment that led the Partners to get started and/or to see the potential for this to succeed.**

In 2005 GTO started building toilets and providing hygiene promotion activities in developing countries, where access to improved sanitation is a privilege. When GTO started to work with German schools they found similar problems and began to realize that their experience from the development context could be a valuable contribution for schools in Germany too. The existing taboo and a resulting lack of ownership and participation were identified as the key issues leading to the situation. In order to address these problems the idea of a competition was born and it needed only a few months to build a powerful consortium with corporate partners to implement the project.

About the Co-Creation

**Barriers: What main barriers may you have encountered to co-create during the creation and implementation of the project and how did you try to overcome them?**

As a not-for-profit organization GTO pursues other aims than profit-oriented companies. Finding a balance between these two positions required a high level of coordination. Besides the project partners GTO had to deal with various actors who were involved in the renovation processes, e.g. school headmasters, teachers, facility managers, craft enterprises, education and building authorities. Predefined contact persons and clear responsibilities for specific areas of collaboration should be identified in order to shorten the communication paths.

**Governance: What is the type of the relationship between the partners? (e.g. joint venture, contractual relationship, joint project...)**

The GTO partnered with four main players in the sanitation supply and cleaning sector: Villeroy & Boch, Hansgrohe, CWS-Boco and 3B Dienstleistung in order to jointly tackle the school sanitation situation. Although the main concept was developed by GTO the partners were involved in all relevant decisions throughout the project. The companies not only funded the project and provided the materials to equip the winning schools, they also participated in all activities during the contest and were part of the jury who chose the winning concepts and handed over the awards and prizes.

**Interaction model: How is the project a transformative partnership? How is the interaction transforming the partnering organizations and their employees/ leadership in terms of creating a new vision, new management practices, new skills and new organizational structures? Please provide concrete examples**

The project was a reality check for the partners. They are working in the sector for years and may have children who go to school but didn't know how worse the situation at German schools is. The partners were really shocked about some schools they have seen and wanted to engage. During the process of the project they learned a lot about participation and appropriate approaches to tackle the issue. Villeroy & Boch, Hansgrohe and CWS-Boco started looking into ways to improve their products, to make them more appropriate for schools. 3B-Dienstleistung who work in the field of restroom cleaning wanted to improve their communication with the schools especially with pupils and teachers. At the end the partners learned that they can change something with their special services and materials and that made them personally and professionally proud.

**How did you find out about this competition?**

Newsletter from stifter-helfen.de

**Source URL:** <https://www.changemakers.com/discussions/entries/toiletten-machen-schule-wettbewerb-toilets-are-making-g#comment-0>